

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

Republican Legislative Leaders Blast Democratic Campaign ‘Scams’



Predict Voter Backlash at Taxpayer Financed Campaigns

HARTFORD – House and Senate Republican leaders today condemned Democratic efforts to scuttle real legislative campaign finance reform efforts by drawing up two competing bills.

“The Democrats should be ashamed of themselves because they have shown they have no intention on enacting real reform,” House Leader Rep. Robert M. Ward of North Branford said. “It is a simple matter to close loopholes in existing law. The public is not going to buy this ‘bait and switch’ approach of publicly claiming to stand for real reform and then killing it behind closed caucus doors.”

Senate Leader Louis DeLuca of Woodbury said it was outrageous that the Democrats want to have taxpayers foot the bill for political campaigns that will cost millions in every cycle.

“All I keep hearing is how these bills are going to ‘reform’ the election system yet there is not one person that can tell you how the addition of taxpayer money into campaigns will put an end to corruption,” said Sen. DeLuca. “They have no idea as to how much this system will cost, but it has to be a substantial amount of money. Even if you make the system voluntary it inevitably takes away funding earmarked for other state programs.”

Ward said, “The majority party has abdicated its responsibility by reporting out two contradictory bills,” and he chided House Speaker James Amann’s name calling of Governor Rell. “That does not bode well for the resolution of this important issue,” said Ward, who again called for action on the sweeping reform initiatives that Gov. Jodi Rell put forth that would eliminate special interest money back in January.

DeLuca added, “If anything this gives people, especially incumbents an incentive to exceed the limits. So I don’t think this does anything to change the system except create more spending that will eventually lead to calls for higher taxes, and that is to be expected from the people supporting this type of ‘reform.’”

House and Senate Democrats cannot agree on a meaningful reform proposal and have refused to consider Gov. Rell’s plan to eliminate most political action committees, do

away with lucrative so-called ad books, ban lobbyist money from races and reduce the maximum individual donation. Amann suggested at business meeting in Stamford on Tuesday that Democrats have no interest in eliminating PAC money or ad books because Democrats out raise Republicans by four- and five-to-one ratios in those categories.

The Republicans called that the “height of hypocrisy.”